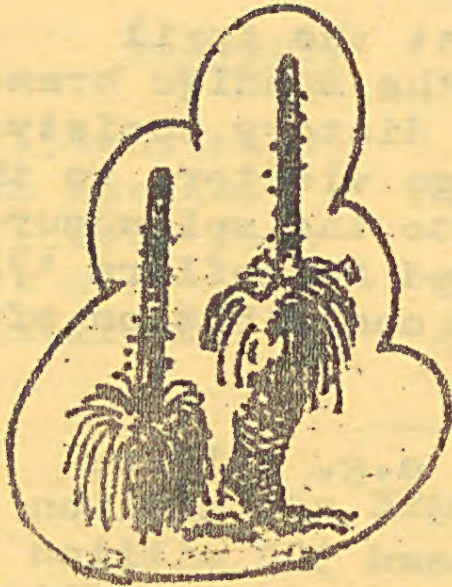


FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB OF BALLARAT.

EXCURSION/NEWS SHEET - MAY 1978.



President-	Mr. G. Binns	Ph. 323670
Vice-Pres-	Mr. R. Borch	428630
Secretary-	Miss H. Burgess	312210
Treasurer-	Mr. S. Reynolds	327721

Meetings held in the Administrative Building at the School of Mines, Lydiard St. Sth. first Friday of each month at 8 p.m.

MEETING: 5th May- Dr. H. Dick- "Rock Plants in Australia"

MEETING: 2nd June- Mr. P. Day- "Geology and Natural History of the Ballarat Area."

MAY EXCURSIONS: 7th May - Lakes in the Skipton-Streatham area. Leader will be Ballarat Fisheries & Wildlife Officer John Clements. The itinerary will include a visit to the eel factory at Skipton and, subject to road conditions, Lake Wongan, Nerrin Nerrin and Pink Lakes. Weather permitting this should be an excellent excursion. Departs 9.30 a.m. from Crocker's corner. Latecomers could join us at the eel factory. We will be leaving there about 11.30 a.m.

SATURDAY 20th May- Lake Wendouree, half day. 1.30 p.m. Crockers corner or a little later at the west end of St. Pat's Boatshed parking area

JUNE EXCURSIONS: 4th June - Creswick - Fungi, Eucalypts. Leader Mr. A. Sonsee. Half day. 1.30.

SATURDAY 17th June: Invermay - Fungi. Leader Mrs. F. Chuk.

NEW MEMBERS:

Mrs. Glynis Hendrickson and Mr. George Nykoluk were welcomed to the Club at the April meeting. We wish you both a long and happy association.

SURVIVAL IN THE INSECT WORLD.

Before his very interesting talk at the April meeting, Mr. R. B. Allen, Chairman of the Bendigo branch of the Western Victorian Field Natural History Society referred to the enjoyment of the Bendigo visitors to the Ballarat 25th Anniversary meeting and to the splendour of the birthday cake. He also mentioned Photoflora '78 and congratulated Mrs. Bedggood on her contribution of three slides.

Insects and their near relatives, e.g. spiders have been on earth for a very long time - 350 million years in the case of wingless insects and 300 million years for the ancestors of our present day dragon flies. By contrast man has been around for about 2 million years.

As a result of 350 million years of evolution there are now some 900,000 known species of insects - by far the largest group in the animal world as compared with say the 40,000 spiders and only 9,000 bird species.

Mr. Allen illustrated many of the classes of insects - from the Aptera - the most primitive class of silverfish and springtails through the Orthoptera - the grasshoppers etc., Lepidoptera - butterflies and moths, Neuroptera - dragon flies etc., Coleoptera - beetles, Hymenoptera - ants, bees, wasps, Hemiptera and Homoptera - bugs, cicada, sapsuckers to the Diptera - the true flies.

Many spiders and insects survive by preying on other insects and these in their turn adopt methods of camouflage, bluff, protective colouring, or frightening behaviour to ward off attack. Others group together for mutual protection against birds and other insects.

Mr. Allen brought a number of specimens for display, among which were a range of case moth nests; a pink shouldered phasmid - a large insect with a wing span of 16 cm and more, which lives in the top of gum trees and is rarely seen; and the paper nest of a paper chewing wasp - *Polistes variabilis*.

In his vote of thanks, Mr. Fry expressed the thanks of the audience for a very fine display of slides, many of which emphasised the beauty of the species. F. Harrap.

DETAILS OF "PHOTOFLORA '78."

Receipts

Expenses

Tickets sold		Hire of Hall	15.00
in Advance	205.90	Guarantee to NPPS	65.00
Tickets sold		$\frac{1}{2}$ Profit to NPPS	105.10
at door	63.60	Total payment to Photoflore	170.10
Catalogues	20.70	$\frac{1}{2}$ Profit retained by Field	
		Naturalist Club of Ballarat	105.10
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\$290.20		\$290.20	
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Attendance 193

<u>Comparison-</u>	Our share of Photoflora 1974 was \$107.70			
"	"	"	"	1976 was \$ 98.70
"	"	"	"	1978 was \$105.10 S.R.

The thanks and appreciation of our Club is extended to Miss M. White of Anglesea for setting up such a beautiful display of her etchings and water colours of coastal flora and native plants in the foyer at "Photoflora '78" exhibition. Mrs. S. Bedggood is also to be commended and thanked for her display of pressed orchids of the Ballarat district. Charts and posters of birds and other naturalist subjects added to the enjoyment of the evening. B.G.

TREE PLANTING AND EROSION PREVENTION AT LAKE BURRUNBEET.

Recently I wrote to the Ballarat Shire expressing concern at the erosion problems, and lack of natural regeneration of the red river gums, Euc. camaldulensis, around the shores of the lake. As a result an on site inspection was arranged with the Shire President, Field Naturalists Club members, Field and Game Association, Fisheries and Wildlife Department and the Ballarat and District Anglers Association.

The steep sand hills on the eastern slopes of the lake were inspected and all representatives unanimously agreed that immediate attention was needed to stop the erosion caused by car tracks and the removal of sand, as the Lake

is an important conservation area, and remedies taken now would ensure its importance in the future.

The Ballarat Shire has already planted pines and native trees and shrubs on the upper banks and this is to be highly commended.

It was agreed that measures be taken immediately to prevent vehicles being driven down to the shore, and also the grazing of the sand dunes be stopped.

Early in June a working bee will be organised, and members of all the groups present will assist in the planting of 100 Euc. camaldulensis donated by the Ballarat Shire, along the water's edge south of the caravan park. Wire guards will also be supplied by the Shire to prevent rabbits eating the young trees.

It is hoped that with the necessary after-care of trees, the project will be a success, and be the forerunner of future plantings that will eventually provide for tree cover all round the very beautiful lake. I trust that all members will assist in this project. It is essential that our Club becomes involved in these kind of environmental projects. Also it is hoped that vandalism will not take place.

S. Bedggood.

W.V.F.N.C.A. CASTLEMAINE CAMP-OUT.

A Geology excursion led by Mr. Ern Perkins was very interesting. We toured Fryerstown and Castlemaine looking at old gold mining sites, historic graves, volcanic mountains and rock faces on road cuttings. We saw anticlines and synclines and fault lines. We also visited the main geological attraction of the district - the Castlemaine rock factory. We stopped at the Duke of Cornwall mine to look at the old relics.

Some of us found fossils at Murdering Flat and I found Pyrites crystals and a graptolite fossil which is a very old form of sea life.

Martin Rotheram.

MELVILLE CAVES EXCURSION.

Date: 15th April 1978.

Occasion: Conservation Committee of the Bird Observer Club's Survey. This is for the Land Conservation Council's study of the North Central Study area.

Early on the Saturday morning and in beautiful Autumn weather, some members of the Ballarat Field Naturalist's Club travelled to Melville Caves. Here, the centre of activities was based, and where introductions were made. We were divided into working parties and given the ~~necessary~~ maps and directions for the forthcoming day.

We then set off enthusiastically for the forested areas surrounding St. Arnaud in North Western Victoria. It was found that the dry box - ironbark forest supported a light understorey consisting chiefly of low growing acacias, grevilleas and various members of the pea family, some of which were prostrate in growth. Ground cover consisted mostly of grasses, lilies and orchids, but throughout the area bare, dusty patches were often noted.

As expected, the bird life of the area was usual for this type of habitat. Choughs were very common and were with us throughout the day. A great variety of honey-eaters was also noted. No doubt this meant that flowering plants were about, probably eucalypts.

At the end of a very interesting day, our results were handed to the organizers for inclusion in the Bird Observer Club's Survey.

P. Murphy.

A SHORT BIRD LIST:

Welcome swallow, Crimson rosella, Grey thrush, Yellow tufted honeyeater, Eastern spinebill, White eared honeyeater, Brown tree creeper, Red-backed parrot, Wedge-tailed eagle, Nankeen kestrel, Black cormorant, Pied cormorant, Brown hawk, Spur winged plover, Sulphur crested cockatoo, Long-billed corella, Galah, Kookaburra, Tree martin, Blue wren, Chestnut-rumped thornbill, Scarlet robin, Red-capped robin, Southern yellow robin, Willie wagtail, Little raven, Little grebe.

CASTLEMAINE CAMP OUT.

On Sunday 23rd April a convoy of over 30 cars embarked on a most interesting tour taking in a number of mineral springs. We were given a list and asked to show our preferences with ratings from 1 to 5. Glenlyon Spring rated high on my list. At Glenlyon we also saw a beautifully marked Brown hawk and noted on a nearby pool the Hoary grebe, Dusky moorhen, Coot and a Black swan. As we drove through part of the Wombat State Forest we noted magnificent stands of candlebark and other eucalypts, stopping at Lyonville Springs for a lunch break. Many different wattles were noted - including the dainty Mitchell's wattle, Golddust, Rough, Prickly Moses etc., as well as several "egg and bacon" species, different grevilleas, masses of violets, coffee bush and many more.

Springs at Leitch's Creek and Tipperary proved interesting areas to visit too. I would like to stress that when travelling in convoy the car behind should be kept in sight - particularly at road junctions, so that they are not left guessing as to which way the cars in front turned.

F. Williamson.

MORE INTERESTING NOTES ON CASTLEMAINE CAMP OUT.

Approximately one hundred members from twelve Western Victorian Field Naturalist's Clubs met at the Vaughan Springs Reserve on Saturday 22nd April 1978. They were cordially welcomed by members of the Castlemaine Club whose friendliness and efficiency were the keynotes of a most successful Camp-Out. Thorough preparation made for a smooth take-off.

On arrival participants were identified clearly by label, given comprehensive notes and invited to join one of two excursions - a Bush Walk under the direction of Mr. R. A. Bradfield and a Tour of the Castlemaine District by car led by Mr. Ern. Perkins. Eight members of the Ballarat Club joined the former - the Walking Bush Tour which attracted most members present - an anticipated five to six mile trek - this was negotiated without

mishap, happily by all children as well as senior citizens.

Slight rain did nothing to dampen enjoyment nor enthusiasm during the next three hours and doubtful mileage. During this time we were not only part of the bush, but part of history.

We crossed the Loddon river, climbed the bank to Peter Moyle's water race, the older, Nolan's race being above that - both amazing testimonials to the surveying and engineering skills of these men of the mid-nineteenth century; crossed the gully to Norfolk Island, "a rather raucous suburb of Vaughan in the 1850's"; over Sailor's Gully to Sailor's Hill, basalt capped, and heard here of the Chinese and their role on the gold fields; walked up Oven Gully to arrive at Italian Hill where the Italians and Irish battled long ago; descended to Happy Valley - a lovely river flat with an unexpected freshly ploughed paddock of rich red soil - mosses and lichens - tall impressive gums marking the river course.

Along the route Mr. Bradfield gave a lively commentary - he is a fund of information on the history, the geology, the vegetation, the wild life - a most engaging narrator who made the experience one not to be missed. For those unfortunate enough not to have participated his notes are well worth reading.

As is typical of all Field Naturalist excursions, members are most generous in sharing their knowledge - at the same time always eager to learn. This excursion gave all a splendid idea of the terrain and vegetation. Prickly acacias and hakeas; grey box and along the river, red and white gums together with ti-tree made a lasting impression. Not many birds were seen - though our President can probably add more than White throated tree-creepers. Droppings on the ground indicated that rabbits, sheep, kangaroos and cattle all frequented the area. According to the notes, platypus have been sighted in the river. Remnants of the hey day of the mining era are everywhere - from the 1850's to the 1920 depression. A clump of Belladonna lilies records only someones long forgotten dream and ambition.

As members emerged from the bush and rejoined the twentieth century on the main highway they were refreshed by a cool breeze and an unforgettable sight cross the valley opposite - a feast of colour - autumn gold - no doubt a legacy of the mining days also.

Saturday evening at the Burke and Wills Mechanics Institute at Fryerstown after the formal business, Castlemaine members presented "This is Our District" - on film with commentary by impressive speakers. The slides were particularly well chosen. Mr. Winterbottom spoke on the change in civilization: Mr. Ern. Perkins on the Geology: Mr. George Sitch on the Botany together with the President Mrs. Rita Mills. A splendid exhibition of botanical specimens - all classified - was also on display. The evening ended with supper, catered by Misses Joyce Chapman and Dorothy Winterbottom.

Maureen Christie.

A SHORT PLANT LIST - MELVILLE CAVES SURVEY.

Grey box - *Eucalyptus microcarpa*
Yellow box - *Eucalyptus melliodora*
Long leaved box - *Eucalyptus goniolocalyx*
Red box - *Eucalyptus polyanthemus*
Yellow gum - *Eucalyptus leucoxylon*
Brown stringybark - *Eucalyptus baxteri*
River red gum - *Eucalyptus camaldulensis*
Blue gum - *Eucalyptus globulus* var. *bicostata*
Red ironbark - *Eucalyptus sideroxylon*
Mountain grevillea - *Grevillea alpina*
Goldfields grevillea - *Grevillea dryophylla*
Hedge wattle - *Acacia armata*
Golden wattle - *Acacia pycnantha*
Goldfields wattle - *Acacia acinacea*
Spreading wattle - *Acacia genistifolia*
Lightwood - *Acacia implexa*
Matted bush-pea - *Pultenaea pedunculata*
Grey everlasting - *Helichrysum obcordatum*
Box mistletoe - *Amyema miquellii*
Sweet bursaria - *Bursaria spinosa*
Daphne heath - *Brachyloma daphnoides*
